



# THE FACTS: After-School

**Creating links to strengthen after-school!**

## **Children spend 20 percent of their waking hours in school. How are our children spending the other 80 percent?**

- Some 14.3 million kindergarten through 12th graders in this country take care of themselves after the school day ends, including almost four million middle school students in grades six to eight. The parents of 15.3 million children say their children would participate if an after-school program were available.<sup>1</sup>
- In Michigan, 450,000 children are home alone after school. Nearly one-third of Michigan's children are left to care for themselves for one to five days per week. Forty-eight percent of Michigan families who do not have after-school care wish their children could attend after-school programs.<sup>2</sup>

## **Voters support investments in after-school**

- Support for after-school crosses party and ideological lines. Eighty-two percent of voters agree that there should be some type of organized activity or safe place for children and teens to go after school every day that provides opportunities for them to learn (66 percent strongly agree).<sup>1</sup>
- Sixty-three percent of Michigan voters support funding for after-school programs.
- Two in three voters (65 percent) say that after-school programs "are an absolute necessity" for their community. Seventy-eight percent of Democratic women, sixty percent of Republican women and ninety-six percent of African American voters agree with that statement.<sup>1</sup>
- Sixty-nine percent of voters support increased funding for after-school programs even if it leads to a tax increase.<sup>1</sup>

## **After-School's return on investment**

A research study of a major after-school program revealed that every one dollar invested in the program produced three dollars worth of benefits to youth and the general public. This figure does not include the added savings from the six-fold drop in crime by boys in the program.<sup>3</sup> Structured experiences for youth provide excellent economic returns in that after-school programs can reduce child care, crime and welfare costs, improve school performance, and increase compensation/future taxable income earnings.

## **High-quality after-school programs...**

- ✓ Improve student achievement
- ✓ Keep kids healthy and safe
- ✓ Reduce the cost of child care, welfare, and crime

## Improve student achievement

- Research indicates that children who attend high-quality, out-of-school time programs have better peer relations, emotional adjustment, conflict resolution skills, grades, and conduct in school compared to their peers who are not in out-of-school-time programs.<sup>2</sup>
- Children who attend quality out-of-school-time programs spend more time in learning opportunities, academic activities, and enrichment activities and spend less time watching television than their peers.<sup>2</sup>
- Research on after-school programs reveals that participants show improvements in standardized test performance and homework completion/quality. There is also a link between after-school programs and a reduction in grade retention.<sup>5</sup>

## Keeps kids healthy and safe

- During the hours of 3 p.m.—6 p.m. the occurrence of juvenile crime triples. These are the hours that kids are most likely to become victims of crime. Being unsupervised after school doubles the risk that 8th graders will smoke, drink alcohol, or use drugs.<sup>2</sup>
- Providing structured experiences for youth can positively impact the public's health as nearly 40 percent of Michigan youth say they engage in an insufficient amount of physical activity; at least 10.7 percent of high school youth are overweight and 13.3 percent are at risk for becoming overweight; it is far more likely that overweight youth will be overweight as adults; and the direct and indirect costs associated with physical inactivity in Michigan in 2002 was estimated at \$8.9 billion.<sup>2</sup>

## Reduce the cost of child care, welfare, and crime

- One study showed that after-school programs helped parents balance work and family life; 60 percent of parents said they missed less work and 59 percent said after-school programs supported them in keeping their job.<sup>4</sup>
- Seventy percent of all Michigan school-age children live in families where the sole parent or both parents work, and being unsupervised during the non-school hours puts children and youth at greater risk of truancy, performing poorly in school, depression, substance abuse, and becoming a victim of crime.<sup>2</sup>

### The Michigan After-School Partnership Vision

"All Michigan children and youth will have the opportunity to participate in high-quality after-school programs that support their success through social, cultural, physical, and intellectual development."

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### References

- <sup>1</sup> Afterschool Alliance (2006). *Seven in Ten Voters Want New Congress To Increase Afterschool Funding, Poll Finds*. Washington, D.C.
- <sup>2</sup> Michigan After-School Initiative (2003). *The Michigan After-School Initiative Report*. Lansing, MI.
- <sup>3</sup> Fight Crime: Invest in Kids. *America's Afterschool Choice: The Prime Time for Juvenile Crime or Youth Enrichment and Achievement*, 2000.
- <sup>4</sup> Reisner, Ellen, (2001). *Building Quality and Supporting Expansion of After School Projects: Results from the TASC After School Program's Second Year*. Washington, D.C.
- <sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Education. *21st Century Community Learning Centers; Providing Quality Afterschool Learning Opportunities for America's Families*, Sept. 2000.